



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, May 31, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK and Fuji TV gave top play to reports that sumo wrestler Takayasu was officially promoted to the second-highest rank of ozeki today. Other top news included a report that three men were killed in a shooting at a Nissan dealership in Greenville, Texas, on Tuesday.

INTERNATIONAL

Major explosion in Kabul kills 49, injures two Japanese Embassy staff members

NHK reported this afternoon on a major explosion near the German Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Wednesday morning, which killed at least 49 people and injured about 320 others. The network said the windows of the Japanese Embassy, which is located about 100 meters away from the German Embassy, shattered with the force of the blast, injuring two Japanese Embassy staff members. The two reportedly suffered minor injuries. The other embassy employees are safe within the embassy. According to Reuters, the explosion was caused by a car bomb.

Suga, Yang agree to further improve bilateral ties

NHK reported this afternoon that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga held a meeting with visiting Chinese State Councillor Yang at the Kantei this morning, during which they agreed to continue to strive toward improving Japan-China relations, with an eye on possibly holding a summit on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Germany in July. During the 35-minute meeting, Suga expressed hope to further improve bilateral relations by increasing visits by their nationals to each other's country for tourism and business, as this year marks the 45th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic ties.

between the two nations and next year marks the 40th anniversary of the Japan-China Peace and Friendship Treaty. Yang reportedly concurred.

- [**Abe persuades Trump to accept “anti-protectionism” clause at G7 Summit**](#) (Yomiuri)
- [**Special Advisor Hasegawa dispatched to Sakhalin for consultations with governor**](#) (Nikkei)
- [**Analysis: Japan needs “bargaining leverage” against U.S. push for trade deal**](#) (Kyodo News)
- [**U.N. rights expert airs concern about Japan’s freedom of expression**](#) (Kyodo News)
- [**Gov’t to expand confiscation of cargo bound for North Korea**](#) (Yomiuri)
- [**Editorial: N. Korea’s latest missile launch reckless challenge to int’l encirclement**](#) (The Japan News)
- [**Editorial: China the key to halt N. Korean missile provocations**](#) (The Mainichi)
- [**A year later, Trump’s world tests audacity of nuclear-free hope**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**JFK’s popularity rises in the era of Trump**](#) (Sankei)

ECONOMY

[**U.S. Embassy’s econ chief visits energy facilities in Rokkasho**](#)

The May 26 edition of Too Nippo reported on a visit to the village of Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture, on May 25 by Nicholas Hill, Minister Counselor for Economic and Science Affairs at the U.S. Embassy. The paper wrote that the minister counselor visited a nuclear fuel reprocessing plant and a wind power station in the village and later met with Mayor Toda. The mayor told reporters that he briefed the U.S. official on how the village came to host the nuclear fuel reprocessing plant amid bitter controversy. The paper quoted Minister Counselor Hill as saying it was his first visit to Rokkasho and he found the village attractive.

- [**U.S. Sen. McCain urges allies to pursue TPP negotiations**](#) (Kyodo News)
- [**Japan’s jobs-to-applicants ratio highest in 43 years**](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [**Life science innovation hub developed in Kawasaki City**](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)

- [Canada to look into “multiple options” on TPP: Trade minister Champagne](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan plans high-tech solutions to growth obstacles](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [METI to develop geothermal power using supercritical water](#) (AERA)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister’s schedule on May 30](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of interpellations at Upper House committee, May 30](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Abe’s Article 9 revision proposal gains support in LDP](#) (Yomiuri)
- [LDP heavyweight comments on Tokyo governor, constitutional revision](#) (Sankei)
- [Cabinet Office shutting out reporters from bureau linked to Kake scandal](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Ex-ministry bureaucrat: Abe adviser spoke in place of PM in pushing school plans](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Cartoon: Imagined anti-Abe cabal](#) (Sankei)
- [Ex-Osaka chief to retire as policy adviser to party he formed](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Article 9](#) (Akahata)
- [40% of small municipalities say will consider adopting direct democracy system in future, poll](#) (Mainichi)

SECURITY

Citizens’ group adopts resolution against U.S. military’s use of ramp at Kadena AB

Okinawa Times wrote that a group of Kadena citizens that works closely with the government of Kadena unanimously adopted on Tuesday a resolution opposing the U.S. military’s plan to use the Navy ramp at Kadena AB that was not supposed to be used following the construction of a new ramp in another location in January. The leader of the group said that the plan runs counter to the 1996 SACO agreement and that the old ramp should not be used again. The group plans to deliver a

letter of protest today to the Defense Ministry's Okinawa Bureau and the Okinawa office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- [Analysis: DPRK missile launch simulates pinpoint attack against ROK, Japan](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gov't to conduct regional evacuation drill in Yamagata](#) (Nikkei)
- [UN human rights report mentions Okinawa](#) (Ryukyu Shimpō)

SCIENCE

- [Geologists aim to name age after Chiba](#) (The Japan News)
- [Otsuka, Daiichi Sankyo boost investment in cancer medication](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Health Ministry plans individualized cancer treatment using patients' genome information](#) (Nikkei)

EDUCATION

- [English education to start for 3rd graders from FY 2018](#) (Kyodo News)

SOCIETY

Boxer Ryota Murata loses match, gains greater passion to fight

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on Japanese boxing gold medalist Ryota Murata, who lost to Hassan N'Dam of France in the WBA middleweight title fight on May 20. The judges' decision caused so much controversy that WBA President Mendoza apologized for the result and ordered a rematch. The program interviewed Murata, who said he has no complaints about the judges' decision, and added that his worst-case scenario was to win a match with a controversial decision. He added that although he wanted to win the match, his loss actually increased his passion for boxing. He also said that books on philosophy and psychology have helped him to tackle the fear of engaging in professional boxing.

- [50 rescued from human traffickers in Japan in 2016](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Editorial: Weight of news report with real name](#) (Sankei)
- [Suicides down, but Japan still second highest among major industrialized nations, report says](#) (The Japan Times)

OPINION POLLS

- [Opinion poll & results from Nikkei Digital](#) (Nikkei Online)
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Official - Transitory

UNCLASSIFIED